

What is claimed is:

1. A droplet ejection apparatus comprising:

a drive signal generator for generating a set of drive signals including a plurality of drive pulses;

a drive pulse selector for selecting a set of drive pulses in accordance with a print datum of each pixel; and

a head for ejecting a droplet from a nozzle provided corresponding to a channel, by changing a volume of the channel according to the set of drive pulses selected,

wherein, the drive signal includes a micro-vibration pulse as one of the drive pulses to generate a micro-vibration of meniscus in the nozzle in such a degree that the droplet is not ejected, said micro-vibration pulse being formed of a rectangular wave which include at least one micro-vibration pulse having a pulse width of  $(2n) AL$ , where  $AL$  is  $1/2$  of the acoustic resonance period of the channel, and  $n$  is an integer not smaller than 1.

2. The droplet ejection apparatus of claim 1, wherein the micro-vibration pulse includes a rectangular wave having a pulse width of  $2 AL$ .

3. The droplet ejection apparatus of claim 1, wherein the micro-vibration pulse includes a rectangular wave having a pulse width of 1 AL and a rectangular wave having a pulse width of 2 AL.

4. The droplet ejection apparatus of claim 1, wherein the micro-vibration pulse is applied before an ejection pulse for ejecting the droplet is applied.

5. The droplet ejection apparatus of claim 1, wherein the rectangular wave having a pulse width of  $(2n)$  AL is applied at the last timing of the micro-vibration pulse.

6. The droplet ejection apparatus of claim 5, wherein the ejection pulse is applied after 1 AL from the time when the rectangular wave having the pulse width of  $(2n)$  AL is applied at the last timing of the micro-vibration pulse.

7. The droplet ejection apparatus of claim 1, wherein the ejection pulse for ejecting the droplet comprising:

a first pulse formed of a rectangular wave to expand the volume of the channel, and 1 AL later, restoring it to an original state; and

a second pulse formed of a rectangular wave to reduce the volume of the channel, and a prescribed period later, restoring it to the original state,

wherein a voltage of the first pulse  $V_{on}$  is higher than a voltage of the second pulse  $V_{off}$ .

8. The droplet ejection apparatus of claim 7, wherein the micro-vibration pulse is formed of a rectangular wave which reduces the volume of the channel, and subsequently restore to the original state, and a voltage of the micro-vibration pulse is same as the voltage  $V_{off}$  of the second pulse in the ejection pulse.

9. The droplet ejection apparatus of claim 1, wherein the maximum extrusive amount of the meniscus by the micro-vibration pulse is not larger than a radius of the nozzle.

10. The droplet ejection apparatus of claim 1, wherein the head comprises an electric - mechanical conversion element which changes the volume of the channel by the application of at least one of the ejection pulse or the micro-vibration pulse.

11. The droplet ejection apparatus of claim 10, wherein the electric - mechanical conversion element comprises a piezoelectric material which forms a partition wall between adjacent channels, and which is deformed in a shearing mode by applying a voltage.

12. The droplet ejection apparatus of claim 1, wherein the droplet is an ink droplet.

13. A drive method for a droplet ejection head, comprising:  
generating a set of drive signals including a plurality of drive pulses by a drive signal generator;

selecting a set of drive pulses in accordance with a print datum of each pixel by a drive pulse selector;

ejecting a droplet by changing a volume of a channel according to the set of drive pulses selected, from a nozzle of the droplet ejection head, the nozzle being provided corresponding to the channel,

wherein a micro-vibration pulse is applied onto the droplet ejection head to generate a micro-vibration of meniscus in the nozzle in such a degree that the droplet is not ejected,

wherein, the drive signal includes a micro-vibration pulse as one of the drive pulses to generate a micro-vibration of meniscus in the nozzle in such a degree that the droplet is not ejected, said micro-vibration pulse being formed of rectangular waves which include at least one micro-vibration pulse having a pulse width of  $(2n) AL$ , where  $AL$  is  $1/2$  of the acoustic resonance period of the channel, and  $n$  is an integer not smaller than 1.

14. The drive method of claim 13, wherein the micro-vibration pulse includes a rectangular wave having a pulse width of  $2 AL$ .

15. The drive method of claim 13, wherein the micro-vibration pulse includes a rectangular wave having a pulse width of  $1 AL$  and a rectangular wave having a pulse width of  $2 AL$ .

16. The drive method of claim 13, wherein the micro-vibration pulse is applied before an ejection pulse for ejecting the droplet is applied.

17. The drive method of claim 13, wherein the rectangular wave having the pulse width of  $(2n)$  AL is applied at the last timing of the micro-vibration pulse.

18. The drive method of claim 17, wherein the ejection pulse is applied after 1 AL from the time when the rectangular wave having the pulse width of  $(2n)$  AL is applied at the last timing of the micro-vibration pulse.

19. The drive method of claim 13, wherein the ejection pulse for ejecting the droplet comprising:

a first pulse formed of a rectangular wave for expanding the volume of the channel, and 1 AL later, restoring it to an original state; and

a second pulse formed of a rectangular wave for reducing the volume of the channel, and a prescribed period later, restoring it to the original state,

wherein a voltage of the first pulse  $V_{on}$  is higher than a voltage of the second pulse  $V_{off}$ .

20. The drive method of claim 19, wherein the micro-vibration pulse is formed of a rectangular wave to restore the volume of the channel to the original state after the

volume of the channel have been reduced, and a voltage of the micro-vibration pulse is same as the voltage of the second pulse Voff.

21. The drive method of claim 13, wherein the maximum extrusive amount of the meniscus by the micro-vibration pulse is not larger than a radius of the nozzle.

22. The drive method of claim 13, wherein the head comprises an electric - mechanical conversion element for changing the volume of the channel by the apply ion of at least one of the ejection pulse or the micro-vibration pulse.

23. The drive method of claim 22, wherein the electric - mechanical conversion element comprises a piezoelectric material which forms a partition wall between adjacent channels, and which is deformed in a shearing mode by applying a voltage.

24. The drive method of claim 13, wherein the droplet is an ink droplet.